



**U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement**

# News Release

February 24, 2005

## **ICE RECOGNIZED BY LOUIS VUITTON FOR COMBATING TRADE FRAUD**

LONG BEACH – A leading maker of designer handbags, luggage, and other luxury items today recognize local U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents for their enforcement work targeting those who illegally import and sell counterfeit products.

A New York-based member of Louis Vuitton's Intellectual Property Department presented ICE agents in Long Beach with a plaque and letter commending their outstanding efforts and cooperation in the fight against counterfeiting.



Louis Vuitton praised ICE for its “invaluable contributions in the enforcement of Intellectual Property Rights and United States Anti-Counterfeiting laws” and thanked the agents for their “full commitment to the deterrence of the importation, distribution and sale of illegal counterfeit products and the arrest of individuals committing these unlawful acts.”

The International Anti-Counterfeiting Coalition estimates that counterfeiting results in “more than \$200 billion in lost jobs, taxes and sales” every year. In addition, the criminal organizations responsible for these acts have been linked to organized crime, drug smuggling, and child and slave labor abuses.

Steve Lovett, the supervisory special agent who oversees ICE's local trade fraud enforcement group, said the recognition from Louis Vuitton is gratifying because the agency's partnerships with private companies are crucial to combating this type of crime.

“The profits from the sale of counterfeit merchandise worldwide often go to support other types of criminal enterprise,” Lovett said. “ICE is committed to working aggressively with private industry to dismantle these schemes.”

Last fiscal year, officers from ICE and U.S. Customs and Border Protection seized more than \$20 million worth of counterfeit handbags and related products nationwide. More than \$3.5 million of those seizures occurred at Los Angeles area ports.

#ICE #

*U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.*